

Local Government & Housing Committee

HB 2748

Brief Description: Concerning dues paid to the Washington public ports association by port districts.

Sponsors: Representatives Simpson, Jacks and Chase.

Brief Summary of Bill

- Removes the statutory limit for annual Washington Public Ports Association membership dues.

Hearing Date: 1/18/10

Staff: Becca Kenna-Schenk (786-7291) and Ethan Moreno (786-7386).

Background:

Washington Port Districts: General Purpose and Authority

Washington's port districts were first authorized in 1911 when the Legislature enacted the Port District Act. Port districts are authorized to acquire, build, maintain, operate, develop, and regulate the commercial transportation, transfer, storage, handling, and terminal facilities and industrial improvements within the district. Port districts may levy property taxes and issue revenue bonds in order to finance port operations, capital projects and other development interests.

Washington Public Ports Association

In 1961 the Legislature established the Washington Public Ports Association (Association) to serve as the coordinating agency for all districts in the state.

As specified in statute, the purposes of the Association are to:

- conduct studies common to all ports;
- exchange information relative to port construction, operation and management;

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- promote cooperative efforts between ports and local associate development organizations to assist economic development efforts and build local capacity; and
- operate as a clearinghouse for information, public relations, and liaison for member ports.

Membership to the Association is voluntary. Currently, 68 of the 75 public port districts in the state are members of the Association. Port districts that are members of the Association are statutorily authorized to pay membership dues. Association membership dues are established under the Association's bylaws. Current statute provides that annual dues cannot exceed a sum equal to the amount which would be raised by a levy of one cent per thousand dollars of assessed value against the taxable property within the district.

Summary of Bill:

The annual limit for the Association membership dues of a sum equal to the amount which would be raised by a levy of one cent per thousand dollars of assessed value against the taxable property within the port district is removed.

Appropriation: None.

Fiscal Note: Not requested.

Effective Date: The bill takes effect 90 days after adjournment of the session in which the bill is passed.